



BROTHERS DRINKS

CO. LTD.

COMPANY OVERVIEW

Brothers Drinks is a fast-growing family cider business based in Shepton Mallet Somerset. Although the family has been making cider since 1658, the business began to grow beyond Somerset when brothers (hence the company name!) Matthew, Jonathan, Francis, and Daniel started to sell their Pear Cider at the Glastonbury Festival in 1995. Festival goers wanted to know where they could purchase the cider outside the festival and so the brothers began marketing their innovative ciders to pubs and supermarkets. Today Brothers' range of vegan-friendly fruit ciders – ranging from classics like Strawberry & Lime through to the more unusual, such as Parma Violet and Marshmallow flavours as well as no alcohol options – are listed in retail outlets and pubs across the UK, as well as ordering direct from the company.

CHALLENGE

"Cider consumption in the UK is growing fast, resulting in an expansion of interesting flavours. Cider is low risk product but it can become contaminated by unwanted yeasts and other microorganisms that will have a very negative effect in product quality and safety. Glass bottle breakage, and so foreign body contamination, when the carbonated cider is being filled is also an issue. Ensuring suitable standard for processing environments and improving how cleaning is organised can be great ways of minimising product contamination", explains Mariane Hodgkinson, food hygiene expert at Hillbrush. Food safety and hygiene is a top priority for Brothers and so they were keen to continue with an efficient and professionally managed cleaning routine with quality cleaning tools.



HILLBRUSH'S APPROACH

After a factory audit of the cleaning requirements at Brothers, Hillbrush recommended several static shadowboards with colour coded cleaning tools for use in different parts of the building. Brothers was already used to this type of system but there was an opportunity to increase the range of hygiene products used in certain areas to maximise cleaning efficiencies. The key was that the tools needed to be easy to clean and robust enough to withstand regular use including clearing broken glass from the lines. Hillbrush's ergonomically designed quality cleaning tools – at competitive prices – offered Brothers Drinks' Hygiene Supervisor Andy McCabe the solution he was looking for.

Hillbrush shadowboards were installed relating to cleaning in different areas – floor, machines, janitorial, process and engineering. Shadowboards with colour coded tools for specific jobs reduce the risk of cross contamination in a factory environment, as Mariane Hodgkinson explains: "Shadow boards can be tailored to describe the use of each tool, in different languages if required. Assigning specific coloured cleaning tools to areas to control allergen usage, segregate levels of risk in factory zones, identify floor cleaning and food contact equipment is looked upon favourably by customers, auditors, and inspectors. They demonstrate that the manufacturer, like Brothers, takes hygiene and cleaning seriously and organises procedures effectively in their business".

According to Andy McCabe, production staff are already aware of the hazard points in the factory and know which colour to use in different areas, so they do not cross contaminate. Cross contamination of allergens such as gluten, from beer, and SO2 is a major concern for



“Going the extra mile, as well as competitive prices (of course!) is really important for a growing business like ours.”
Hygiene Supervisor Andy McCabe

the business. The company has a robust cleaning regime which includes ongoing training for existing staff as well as new starters on the benefits of colour coding and how to use, clean and store tools effectively.

“Brothers Drinks has always been on top of its cleaning protocols as this is a particularly important area for us, particularly as we expand our product ranges and output. As well as great quality cleaning tools, expertly designed to do the required job, Hillbrush has advised on practical steps to ensure that the cleaning we have in place is right for our business at this time in our development.